

Message Text

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42

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

RSR-01 OMB-01 IO-13 /109 W

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R 091505Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4913

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

AMCONSUL BELFAST

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 1052

NOFORN

E.O. 11652 XGDS

TAGS: PBOR/EI

SUBJ: GOI DOING HOMEWORK ON COUNCIL OF IRELAND

SUMMARY: GOI HAS NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO COMPLETE ITS
HOMEWORK FOR TALKS WITH BRITISH IN PREPARATION FOR
TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE. THIS WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT
FOR GOI TO INSIST ON SETTING UP COUNCIL OF IRELAND AT
SAME TIME AS NEW NI EXECUTIVE. IN DISCUSSING NI-RELATED
PROBLEMS WITH IRISH, BRITISH HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT THEY
WOULD LIKE DUBLIN TO DROP STRASBOURG HUMAN RIGHTS CASE.
END SUMMARY

1. FOLLOWING COMES FROM SOURCE WE BELIEVE WELL INFORMED,
THOUGH HE MAY LACK PART OF RELEVANT INFO. DETAILS MUST
NOT GET BACK TO IRISH OR BRITISH GOVTs, AS DISCLOSURE
COULD DAMAGE SOURCE.

2. SOURCE SAYS THAT SOME WEEKS AGO BRITISH ASKED IRISH
TO ENGAGE IN CONFIDENTIAL BILATERAL TALKS IN PREPARATION
FOR THE TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE (LONDON, DUBLIN, BELFAST)
PROMISED IN WHITE PAPER. (SOURCE DID NOT SAY WHETHER
IRISH HAD BEEN PUSHING FOR ACTION, BUT WE THINK COSGRAVE
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MIGHT WELL HAVE RAISED SUBJECT IN HIS TALKS WITH HEATH,

AS IRISH HAVE WANTED FULL CONFERENCE IN EARLY AUTUMN. MAIN IRISH INTEREST IN CONFERENCE WOULD BE TO OBTAIN AN EFFECTIVE, OPEN-ENDED COUNCIL OF IRELAND WITH MODEST EXECUTIVE POWERS.) SOURCE EXPLAINED THAT, WHILE BRITISH ARE NOT THEMSELVES PUSHING COUNCIL-OF-IRELAND IDEA, THEY RECOGNIZE DUBLIN INTEREST AND ARE WILLING TO DISCUSS CONCEPT SERIOUSLY AT CONFERENCE AND BILATERAL PREPARATORY TALKS.

3. IN RESPONSE TO BRITISH INVITATION, PM COSGRAVE ASKED HIS MINISTERS TO DO CAREFUL STUDY ON POWERS THAT THEIR DEPTS MIGHT EVENTUALLY TRANSFER TO A COUNCIL OF IRELAND. HERE MINISTERS RAN INTO REAL PROBLEMS. SURRENDER OF SOVEREIGN POWERS IS NOT EASY FOR ANY GOVT, LET ALONE FOR BUREAUCRATS WHO ARE ACCUSTOMED TO WIELDING THEIR SHARE OF POWERS. AT CABINET MEETING WHICH WAS TO DISCUSS QUESTION, MINISTERS FOUND THEY HAD SIMPLY NOT BEEN ABLE TO COMPLETE HOMEWORK SUFFICIENTLY TO COPE WITH SUBJECT. (WE BELIEVE THIS CABINET MEETING WAS JULY 31.) ACCORDINGLY, IRISH TOLD BRITISH THAT EVEN PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE READY UNTIL SEPT. SOURCE BELIEVES THAT THIS WILL MAKE IT HARD TO HOLD ACTUAL TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE UNTIL ABOUT JANUARY.

4. SOURCE ALSO SAYS THAT, IN DISCUSSING NI-RELATED PROBLEMS WITH IRISH, BRITISH HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT THEY ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH HUMAN-RIGHTS CASE NOW BEFORE EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (DUBLIN 1125, OCT 2, 1972). SO FAR, HOWEVER, IRISH HAVE NOT GIVEN ANY SIGNS OF DROPPING CASE.

5. COMMENT: ABOVE INFO ON PREPARATIONS FOR TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE THROWS INTERESTING LIGHT ON NEGOTIATIONS FOR FUTURE OF NI. GOI SOURCES HAVE BEEN INSISTING THAT THEY SUPPORT SDLP LINKAGE BETWEEN FORMATION OF NEW EXECUTIVE, RTFORM OF POLICE, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNCIL OF IRELAND (DUBLIN 927). IF DUBLIN HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO COMPLETE ITS OWN BACKGROUND STUDIES FOR TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE, HOWEVER, GOI COULD NOT EASILY OBJECT TO DELAYING CONFERENCE SLIGHTLY. DUBLIN WOULD

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THEN BE IN WEAK POSITION TO OBJECT TO FORMATION OF NI EXECUTIVE BEFORE TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE.

6. IT DOES APPEAR THAT DUBLIN IS FINALLY GIVING SERIOUS STUDY TO IMPLICATIONS OF IRISH UNITY.

7. ON STRASBOURG CASE: COSGRAVE WOULD PROBABLY LIKE TO REMOVE ANY UNNECESSARY IRRITANTS IN RELATIONS WITH

BRITAIN, BUT MIGHT EXPECT HEAVY CRITICISM IF CASE WERE DROPPED. JUDGING FROM LETTERS IN NEWSPAPERS, EVEN GENERAL PUBLIC HAS INTEREST IN STRASBOURG PROCEEDINGS. SOME POLITICIANS WHO WOULD NORMALLY FAVOR SOFT LINE WITH BRITISH FEEL OBLIGED TO PURSUE STRASBOURG CASE ON HUMAN-RIGHTS GROUNDS.

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